

TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

ACTION MINUTES

Thursday, June 3, 2004

**Temecula Creek Inn
44501 Rainbow Canyon Road
Temecula Creek, CA**

THE FOLLOWING MINUTES ARE A SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE. AUDIO-CASSETTE TAPE OF THE ACTUAL MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR LISTENING IN SCAG'S OFFICE.

The Transportation & Communications Committee of the Southern California Association of Governments held its meeting at the Temecula Creek Inn in Temecula. The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Mayor Lee Ann Garcia, City of Grand Terrace. There was a quorum.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Voting Members Present

Steven Adams
Harry Baldwin
Ron Bates
Lou Bone
Art Brown
Lawrence Dale
Gene Daniels
Richard Dixon
Bonnie Flickinger
Lee Ann Garcia, **Chair**
Frank Gurule
Robin Lowe
Llewellyn Miller
Gary Ovitt
Greg Pettis
Bea Proo
Tod W. Ridgeway
Ron Roberts
Charles Smith
Paul Talbot
Tonia Reyes Uranga

City/County Representing

Riverside, WRCOG
San Gabriel
Los Alamitos
Tustin
Buena Park
Barstow
Paramount
Lake Forest
Moreno Valley, WRCOG
Grand Terrace
Cudahy
Hemet
Claremont
Ontario
Cathedral City, CVAG
Pico Rivera
Newport Beach
Temecula, WRCOG
County of Orange, OCTA
Alhambra
Long Beach

Voting Members Absent

Glen Becerra
Paul Biane
Yvonne Burke

Representing

Simi Valley
County of San Bernardino
County of Los Angeles

George Cole
Bill Davis
Cathryn DeYoung
Judy Dunlap
Gary George
Carol Herrera
Peter Herzog
Sandra Jacobs
Tim Keenan
Bonnie Lowenthal
Patsy Marshall
Judy Mikels
Keith Millhouse
Mark Nuaimi
Pam O'Connor
Will Pieper
Jeffrey Reinhardt
Greig Smith
Cameron Smyth
David A. Spence
Dick Stanford
Tom Sykes
Sidney Tyler
Linda Wilson

Bell, Gateway Cities COG
Simi Valley, VCTC
Laguna Niguel
Inglewood
Redlands, SANBAG
Diamond Bar
Lake Forrest
El Segundo
Cypress
Long Beach
Buena Park
Ventura County
Moorpark
Fontana, SANBAG CTC
Santa Monica
Desert Hot Spring, CVAG
Las Virgenes/Malibu
Los Angeles
Santa Clarita, North LA County
Arroyo Verdugo Cities
Azusa
Walnut
Pasadena
Manhattan Beach/South Bay Cities

Voting Members, Not Elected Officials Present

Rose Casey

Representing

Caltrans, Los Angeles

Voting Members, Not Elected Officials Absent

Board Member

Rotating Board Member

Representing

California, DOT

Air Resources Board

Transportation Commissions – Vacant

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

New Members

No new members at this time

1.0 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Mayor Lee Ann Garcia was unanimously nominated and re-elected as Chair and Councilmember Harry Baldwin was re-elected as Vice-Chair. There were no other nominations, and no opposition.

2.0 CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lee Ann Garcia called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no public comments

4.0 CONSENT CALENDAR

4.1 Approval Items

4.1.1. May 6, 2004 Meeting Minutes

4.2 Receive and File

4.2.1 Intergovernmental Review Clearinghouse Reports

4.2.2 SCAG Legislative Matrix

4.2.3 North Los Angeles Country Combined Highway Corridor
(Letter of Completion)

MOTION was made to approve the consent calendar items, SECONDED,
and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

5.0 ACTION ITEMS

5.1 Draft 2004 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)

Rosemary Ayala, Lead Regional Planner, SCAG staff, presented the Draft 2004 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

Ms. Ayala stated that SCAG was the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) [under Federal law] and the multi-county designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency [under State law] for the six-county Southern California region. SCAG is responsible for developing the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) in cooperation with the State (Caltrans), the county transportation commissions and Imperial Valley Association of Governments, and public transit operations.

Ms. Ayala stated that the 2004 RTIP is composed of over 1900 projects and is programming approximately \$19 billion in fiscal years FY 2004/2005 to 2009/2010. The Draft 2004 RTIP is in the final stages of development and is scheduled for release on June 18, 2004, for a 30-day public review and comment period. During the public review period there will be 7 public hearings conducted, one in each county and one at the SCAG office on July

15, 2004. The Draft 2004 RTIP will be posted on the SCAG web-site. Ms. Ayala pointed out that the Transportation Communications Committee is scheduled to approve the 2004 RTIP in the July/August timeframe and the Regional Council is scheduled to approve the program on August 5, 2004.

In order for the Regional Council to approve the 2004 RTIP the program must meet the following requirements: Consistency with the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan, pass the Regional Emissions Test, financial constraint, timely implementation of Transportation Control Measures (TCM's), and lastly, interagency consultation and public involvement.

Ms. Ayala stated that in regards to the financial constraint requirement there was an issue that staff would like to bring to its attention. The issue is in regards to Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) and Local Surface Transportation Program (STPL) funds. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) states that federal regulations do not allow for the programming of any carryover CMAQ and STPL funds. Based on this interpretation of the regulations, FHWA has stated that a region may only program a yearly apportionment as opposed to a yearly apportionment plus prior year carryover funds.

Previously, the SCAG region was able to program carryover CMAQ and STPL funds into future years. However, Caltrans informs us that this practice was due to the flexibility allowed through the high state cash reserve. Since the state no longer has a high cash reserve, the flexibility in managing the Federal State Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP) no longer exists. Moving forward, MPO's must adhere to programming these federal funds within their yearly apportionment levels. This applies to the 2004 RTIP. Therefore, a county commission who was reserving CMAQ or STPL funds to program on large ticket projects in essence has lost these funds. In addition, projects are not always delivered in the year programmed due to a variety of reasons such as environmental or right-of-way issues. These delayed projects are then carried forward into a subsequent year. However, if this practice continues, it will limit the programming capacity of new projects.

SCAG, the County Commissions, and Imperial Valley met to discuss this issue and drafted a letter that was transmitted to Caltrans on April 28, 2004. Caltrans response basically states that if the SCAG region programs carryover CMAQ and STPL funds they will not approve the SCAG 2004 RTIP.

In addressing this issue the state and federal agencies suggest that an MPO consider the following options: Counties reprogram their projects and push them out into future fiscal years. Counties within the SCAG region may enter into an agreement to borrow funds from one another. Counties may borrow from another region within California or from Caltrans.

SCAG, the County Commissions, and Imperial Valley are working very closely to address this issue. However, it could potentially cause the SCAG region not to meet the financial constraint requirement.

Ms. Ayala closed her presentation by saying staff recommends the release of the Draft 2004 RTIP for public review and comments.

Councilmember Ron Bates then stated that it appears that many of the projects are tied to this year's State Budget, and he asked what staff and the committee could do to make sure that the funding from the State is forthcoming and the Proposition 42 commitment is met.

Mr. Mark Pisano, SCAG Executive Director, then stated that the State Budget was one piece of the gap that needed to be filled. The other piece, was how successful staff will be with the Appropriations Committee. If staff is not able to obtain the appropriations to keep the Gold Line East, the Center Line, and other projects on schedule this summer there is no way it can be said those projects are on schedule. The consensus that we have on the critical projects in Washington in appropriations is a fundamental part of our strategy. Staff needs to rally behind its projects and make sure they get funded in appropriations. The same thing is true in authorization, we need a bill this year. If we do not get re-authorization this year it means less money than anticipated in the RTP. Furthermore, we need to have contingency plans. One of the contingency plans that was presented yesterday at the retreat discussion was the concept of our Growth Vision and the changes in land use along specific corridors and assessment financing structure that can potentially capture those monies or linkage fees. We have to demonstrate that we have a credible schedule to insure our financial issues. Last of all, there are the revenue-backed projects that are plan issues. If we can not demonstrate that we have authority in place and that we are starting to move on developing those projects, then we will also have difficulty on our plan conformity. To summarize, the basic strategy is in an advocacy mobilization effort to get the funds that we planned on and to have a contingency program in the event that we do not get them because the implications of us falling out of conformity are too great for the Region. From the very beginning when putting the Plan and the TIP together, Staff has been up-front with the Region that we were anticipating conformity issues.

Chair Garcia, then asked Mr. Pisano to explain to the Committee the relationship between SCAG and the Transportation Commissions because a lot of what needs to happen is between Staff and the Commissions.

Mr. Pisano, then clarified that SCAG does not make decisions alone but in partnership with the Commissions. This is an issue of such critical importance that he believes the Chairmen of each of the Commissions, the Executive Officer of each of the Commissions, and SCAG's President and himself need to have almost an on-going working dialogue to get through this

issue. There are six commissions in Los Angeles County: the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), the Riverside Transportation Commission (RTC), San Bernardino Associated of Governments (SBAG), Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC), and the Imperial County Council of Governments (ICCG). Staff works with them in preparing the Plan but they do the programming and have the revenue sources.

It was MOVED, SECONDED, and unanimously approved to release the Draft 2004 RTIP for public review and comments.

6.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

6.1 California High Speed Rail Draft EIR/EIS Comments

Ms. Sarah Adams, SCAG Staff, presented comments that will be submitted to the California High Speed Rail Authority proposing a high-speed train system for intercity travel in California. The system would travel between major metropolitan centers of Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area in the north, through the Central Valley, to Los Angeles and San Diego in the south. The Authority prepared a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) to analyze the proposed high speed train system and compares it with a No Project/No Action Alternative and a Modal Alternative.

In order to proceed in the Southern California Region, the proposed California High Speed Train System (HST) must be part of SCAG's long range Regional Transportation Plan and must be included in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) in order to receive funding. A program-level EIR has been certified for all elements of the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Ms. Adams stated that staff's comments center on the Regional Transportation Plan, planned regional projects, funding, coordination, and mitigation.

Mr. Hasan Ikhata, SCAG staff, then clarified that in the case of the EIR Program there was still substantial time to make comments, discuss its consistency and inclusion in the RTP and how it has to contribute to air quality improvement. He also stated the money currently at hand to move forward in the EIS with Maglev, that a portion of it will be spent in looking at the high-speed rail alignment in the corridors and staff is currently negotiating with FRA to be allowed to do so. Mr. Ikhata told the committee that he would never come before them and recommend that both Maglev and high-speed rail be in the same alignment.

Councilmember Robin Lowe, City of Hemet, expressed her view with concern to the media and the region's voters. She feels that those Southern Californians that have traveled to Europe believe that the high-speed rail and Maglev transportation will be a very similar project to that in Europe which is not the case. She feels that staff needs to get out and talk to the various editorial boards because the correct story is not getting out to the public.

Councilmember Richard Dixon, Lake Forrest, then inquired as to whether staff was coordinating with other MPO's throughout the state on the issue?

Ms. Adams, SCAG staff, responded that staff had only received draft comments, approximately three pages, from MTC and SANBAG. They have approached it in a similar fashion as SCAG staff in addressing only the information that is contained within the EIR/EIS and not making policy statements at this point.

6.2 Alternative Fuels

This item was not presented due to insufficient time.

8.0 MAGLEV TASK FORCE REPORT

No report at this time.

9.0 CHAIR REPORT

No report at this time.

10.0 STAFF REPORT

No report at this time.

11.0 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Alternative Fuels and an update on RTIP

12.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements

13.0 ADJOURNMENT

Chair Garcia adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

The next committee meeting will be held on August 5, 2004, 10:30 a.m., at the SCAG Office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hasan M. Ikhata", written over a horizontal line.

Hasan M. Ikhata, Director
Planning and Policy